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Missouri Incomes Hardest Hit the Last Eight Years, Dropping 14.6 Percent

(WASHINGTON) - Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-3) responded to the release of this year's Census Report on Income, Poverty and Health Insurance. The report shows the number of Americans without health insurance increased to 46.3 million in 2008, and has climbed by 7.9 million during the eight years of the Bush Administration. It also shows that real median household income dropped nearly 4 percent last year to \$50,303, with a drop of \$2,197 over the last eight years. The number of Americans in poverty grew to 39.8 million, with the nation's poverty rate climbing to the highest rate since 1997 - to 13.2 percent up from 12.5 percent in 2007 - and 8.2 million more Americans falling into poverty during the Bush years. The 2008 Census report writes the final chapter of the Bush Administration's handling of the economy.

"Forty-six million Americans and more than 734,000 Missourians without health care is a tragedy - and as President Obama reminded us, is not within the 'character of our country.' America faces many serious challenges, but the rising cost of health care represents one of the greatest economic threats to individuals and families, businesses large and small, and our nation's long-term fiscal stability.

"These numbers demonstrate that it is absolutely necessary to add stability and security to our health insurance system. Opponents of health insurance reform should propose their own plan or explain why they think it is best to do nothing while health care costs continue to rise three times faster than wages, millions of Americans continue to be denied coverage because they got sick, and insecurity continues to grow.

"After eight years of one of the worst economic records in history, household incomes of Missourians are down by 14.6 percent, and the number of Missourians in poverty increased by 185,000. From the Recovery Act to historic reforms in health insurance, clean energy, and education, I am continuing to work to build a new foundation for prosperity for American families and businesses."

- Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-3)

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